



**Homeland
Security**

Press Release

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Contact:

Donald Tighe

202-282-8010

- donald.tighe@dhs.gov

HOMELAND SECURITY LAUNCHES EXPANSION OF INFORMATION EXCHANGE SYSTEM TO STATES AND MAJOR CITIES

WASHINGTON, DC, February 24, 2004 - The U.S. Department of Homeland Security, as part of its Homeland Security Information Network initiative, announced today the expansion of its computer-based counterterrorism communications system to all 50 states, five territories, Washington, D.C., and 50 major urban areas to strengthen its flow of threat information.

This communications capability will deliver to states and major urban areas real-time interactive connectivity with the DHS Homeland Security Operations Center through the Joint Regional Information Exchange System (JRIES). This secure system will significantly strengthen the flow of real-time threat information at the Sensitive-but-Unclassified (SBU) level to all users immediately, and provides the platform for future classified SECRET communications to the state level. This collaborative communications environment, developed by state and local authorities, will allow all states and major urban areas to collect and disseminate information between federal, state, and local agencies involved in combating terrorism.

"The Homeland is more secure when each hometown is more secure," said Secretary of Homeland Security Tom Ridge. "Better information that is shared

and understood faster between the federal government and our state and local partners is the way to achieve that security, and this technology system delivers on our promise of an ever more effective partnership."

Each state and major urban area's Homeland Security Advisor will receive software licenses, technology, and training to participate in this Homeland Security Information Network for information sharing and situational awareness. Under the leadership of state and local homeland security advisors, the broadened JRIES community of users will include Adjutant Generals (National Guard), State Emergency Operations Centers, local emergency services providers including firefighters, law enforcement, and others. Future program expansion will include the county level, communication at the classified SECRET level, and the involvement of the private sector. The expanded JRIES system will continue to support the law enforcement and intelligence counterterrorism mission, and will also provide communications, collaboration, and information exchange between DHS and other Federal agencies and local partners.

JRIES is a counterterrorism communications program founded and managed in conjunction with state and local governments, counterterrorism authorities, and law enforcement agencies. At the request of state and local partners, this platform has been adopted by Homeland Security as the system of choice for information sharing between DHS partners as part of the Homeland Security Information Network. JRIES provides real-time collaboration and advanced analytic capabilities.

Already in constant use in the 24-7 DHS Watch of the Homeland Security Operations Center, JRIES is an integrated component of the wider DHS information sharing and collaboration architecture that will help provide situational awareness, information sharing, and collaboration across the 50 States, U.S. territories, and major urban areas. This program helps fulfill the Department of Homeland Security's charge to enable real time information sharing of threats to the homeland with a variety of homeland security partners throughout the federal, state and local levels.

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